



Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund Pilot

City of Santa Rosa, CA

BACKGROUND

Santa Rosa's problems with toxic pollutants date back to the mid-1800s when the city became an important stop on the main rail line connecting San Francisco with Oregon and Washington. Over the intervening years, the railroad, lumber, and supporting industries located major industrial facilities in the city. Changes in these industries lead to disinvestment in many facilities located in the city. Santa Rosa now is home to numerous former industrial sites that are now abandoned or underused. The city's downtown and other neighborhoods affected by brownfields have deteriorated and suffer from economic distress. The median household incomes in the affected areas are less than half of the average median household income in the Bay Area. In addition, affected neighborhoods are home to a high proportion of minority residents, primarily Hispanic.

Potential contamination remains a major stumbling block to attracting private developers to numerous sites throughout the city. The city is working to clean up and redevelop brownfields in order to improve living conditions and control urban sprawl in the area. In cooperation with local businesses and community-based organizations, Santa Rosa has restored a number of abandoned and distressed properties to productive commercial, residential, and public uses.

BCRLF OBJECTIVES

The city's goal is to clean up and reuse vacant and underused brownfields throughout the city, with a focus on designated Redevelopment Areas. Five such areas have been identified, including the Railroad Square district, the Gateway Redevelopment Area, and three Redevelopment Project Areas under the city's Redevelopment Agency. All five areas suffer from disinvestment and deterioration linked to actual or perceived contamination.

PILOT SNAPSHOT



City of Santa Rosa, CA

Date of Announcement:
May 2002

Amount: \$1,000,000

BCRLF Target Area:
Food/Wine Center in the
Railroad Square District

Contacts:

Santa Rosa Office of
Economic Development
(707) 543-3010

Region 9 Brownfields
Coordinator
(415) 972-3188

Visit the EPA Region 9 Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/region09/waste/brown/index.html>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts,
additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and
publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:
www.epa.gov/brownfields

The BCRLF Pilot initially will focus on the proposed site for the Food/Wine Center in the historic Railroad Square District in downtown Santa Rosa. The seven-acre site currently is owned by Northwest Pacific Railroad and Union Pacific Railroad. The railroad companies have conducted extensive assessments of the site and plan to construct a passenger terminal for new passenger rail

services. Both the city and railroads would like to expand the site's use to include mixed use development. The proposed Santa Rosa Food/Wine Center would house the Santa Rosa Junior College District's Culinary School and provide a year-round venue for selling fresh local farm produce.

FUND STRUCTURE AND OPERATIONS

The City of Santa Rosa Office of Economic Development is the cooperative agreement recipient and will serve as the lead agency. The Santa Rosa Department of Housing and Redevelopment will serve as the site manager. Pilot fund manager responsibilities will be undertaken by SAFE/BIDCO, a state agency that manages lending programs for local governments throughout California's six North Coast counties. SAFE/BIDCO also is a certified nonprofit corporation.

LEVERAGING OTHER RESOURCES

The city will leverage loan funds to the maximum extent feasible. The city and Redevelopment Agency are donating a significant amount of staff resources to brownfields revitalization. Santa Rosa will provide in-kind contributions to the BCRLF Pilot. The city will continue to use the provisions of the state's Polanco Act to provide liability immunity to the Redevelopment Agency and require responsible parties to fulfill their cleanup obligations.

Use of BCRLF Pilot funds must be in accordance with CERCLA, and all CERCLA restrictions on use of funding also apply to BCRLF funds.